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ABSTRACT

This report describes the implementation of a child safety-abduction awareness curriculum. The targeted population consisted of primary grade students in a growing, middle class, rural community located in northern Illinois. Assessment of students' skills revealed a lack of strategies to avoid child abduction. Analysis of probable cause data revealed student inability to use an appropriate strategy when presented with a child lure scenario. The faculty reported that no curriculum was being taught to improve these strategies for child safety. A review of solution strategies, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the development and implementation of a child safety curriculum for the targeted grades of kindergarten, second and fourth. Determining curriculum effectiveness involved the assessment of students' use of strategies to avoid abduction. Post-intervention data indicated an increase in students' awareness and ability to use an appropriate strategy when presented with a child lure scenario. (Sixteen appendices include copies of the parent and teacher surveys, student interview, rubrics, safety posters, parent newsletter, and newsletter survey. Contains 18 references.) (Author/AA)

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DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH THE DANGERS OF STRANGERS

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master's of Arts in
Teaching and Leadership

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Field-Based Master's Program

Action Research Project
Site: Rockford, IL
Date: October 1994

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Abstract

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Site: Rockford, IL

DATE: August 24, 1994

TITLE: A Child Safety/Abduction Awareness Program

ABSTRACT: This report describes the implementation of a child safety/abduction awareness curriculum. The targeted population consists of primary students in a growing, middle class, rural community located in northern Illinois. Assessment of students' skills revealed a lack of strategies to avoid child abduction.

Analysis of probable cause data revealed student inability to use an appropriate strategy when presented with a child lure scenario. The faculty reports that there is no curriculum being taught to improve these strategies for child safety.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the development and implementation of a child safety curriculum for the targeted grades of kindergarten, second and fourth. Determining curriculum effectiveness will involve the assessment of students' use of strategies to avoid abduction.

Post intervention data indicated an increase in students' awareness and ability to use an appropriate strategy when presented with a child lure scenario.

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Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

General Statement of Problem

The targeted primary students at the elementary school lack strategies to deal with the dangers of contact with strangers, and the possibilities of abduction, as evidenced by student interview, teacher survey, and parent survey.

Immediate Problem Context

The targeted school is one of two buildings in this northern district. The district was formed in 1975 with the consolidation of two elementary districts. The district serves an area of approximately 50 square miles. It is one of four elementary districts that graduates students to one community high school.

This district is the administrative district and legal agent for the Winnebago County Special Education Cooperative. This cooperative serves the special education needs of students in nine area communities. The central office of the cooperative is housed in the village. The Winnebago County Special Education Cooperative provides special education services such as social work, psychological testing, speech and language therapy, and physical and occupational therapy. Being the administrative district for the cooperative does not cost this district any additional funds.

This district is also responsible for the education of the Goldie B. Floberg residential students. Most of the students have severe and profound handicapping conditions. These students deal with many specialists throughout their day, including occupational and physical therapists.

There is a principal assigned to this program. His office is located at the middle school, where many of these students are included in regular classroom settings.

Also located within the district is a half-time, at-risk, pre-kindergarten program that is funded by the state. This program is housed at the grade school. There are currently ten students enrolled, who are taught by a certified teacher, as well as a classroom aide. These students are identified during the pre-school screening process.

The grade school building serves kindergarten through fourth grade. A total of 577 students age five through ten attend this building, which has a small minority population. The minority statistics are: 0.9 percent Afro-American, 0.9 percent Asian, and 0.5 percent Hispanic population. The average class size is 24-31 students depending on the grade level.

All kindergarten through fourth grade students are in self-contained classrooms and receive daily education in reading, math, science, social studies, and language arts. Students receive art, music, physical education, and library services weekly, from certified specialists on a rotating schedule.

This district employs fifty-four people for the grade school. Thirty are full-time teachers, including a speech therapist and music, art, and physical education specialists. There is also a full-time librarian on staff. The grade school has a full-time nurse, three part-time lunchroom aides, two maintenance people, two secretaries, and four recess aides who supervise the lunchroom and the playground. There are also three Chapter One reading aides, who assist the regular classroom teachers on a weekly basis, rotating throughout the building on an assigned schedule.

Also employed at the grade school are two special education teachers who work with the learning disabled (LD) students, and are resource people for teachers with behavior disordered (BD) students, as well as mentally impaired students.

The two teachers share thirty-five students in a cross-categorical setting. Five of these students are in self-contained programs, while thirty are resource students (spending less than 50 percent of their day in a special education classroom). All of the special education students receive music, art, library, and physical education instruction in a mainstreamed setting. In addition to these students who are serviced in the special education classrooms, there are two mentally impaired and one behavior disorder child who are participating in an inclusion program, spending their entire day in the regular classroom setting. Each of these students has a full-time aide to assist him. This district has a Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) which serves both the grade school and the middle school. The P.T.O. annually holds various fund raising activities that involve the parents, teachers, students and community. The money raised from these fund raisers is put back into the schools to support mini-grant projects, field trips, special equipment purchases, and other items that the P.T.O. feels will benefit the students of the district.

During the 1992-1993 school year, the P.T.O. organized the Parent Resource Group. The Parent Resource Group is a group of volunteer parents who come in to the grade school and middle school to assist teachers. They will do copying, laminating, cutting, typing and many other helpful jobs. It is possible for a teacher to request a parent volunteer in his/her classroom. The parents put in many long hours of volunteer work in this way.

This building is located directly across the street from the community high school, which allows our district to use high school students as teacher assistants one hour a day. These students help grade papers, work with students or help the teacher organize his/her room. The high school aides receive graduation credits for their participation. Most teachers take advantage of this additional program.

The Surrounding Community

The township in this northern Illinois school district has a population of 10,470 people. This district does not serve this entire population, however. The district shares this population with neighboring school districts. It also serves students who live outside of this area, including some in Owen Township, Rockford, Roscoe, and South Beloit.

Local industry includes Woodward Governor, a manufacturing company; Taylor Company, a food service machine company; and Sonoco Products, a paper recycling company. There is also a wide variety of small businesses, as well as an agricultural community.

The number of people moving into this school district is growing much faster than anticipated. In the last six years, the enrollment in this district has increased by 431 students. This is a 63 percent increase since the 1987-1988 school year. From the beginning of the 1992-1993 school year, to the beginning of the present school year, there was an increase of 108 students. This was the largest increase in a single year in the history of the district. The recent and steady growth has been attributed to the building of new and affordable homes throughout this entire district.

In 1988, an addition was added to the middle school. The hope was this addition would adequately serve the district for at least ten years. However, at this time both the elementary school and the middle school have exceeded capacity. The 1992-1993 school year was the first year that the middle school housed the fifth grade students. They were moved to the middle school to relieve overcrowding at the grade school. The result, however, is that both buildings are almost completely full. For the 1993-1994 school year, the middle school had to provide two portable classroom buildings that each house two classrooms on the middle school property.

In December of 1992, the district completed a pre-kindergarten census. The purpose of this census was to determine the number of students who are expected to enter the district within the next few years. The results were analyzed professionally. This brought about the organization of the Citizen's Advisory Committee. Their job would be to study the results and make recommendations concerning future enrollment. The committee concluded and recommended to the Board of Education that a new building is necessary to house the third through fifth grades, and a \$.50 education fund rate increase is also needed to staff this new facility.

On the November 2, 1993 ballot there were two issues put to the public concerning the school district. One was a 5.5 million dollar school building bond issue, which asked the voters to support the building of a new school designed to house third through fifth grades. The second question on the ballot concerned a \$.50 tax increase to the education fund which would have provided \$300,000 to help meet student enrollment growth costs. These monies go to buy books, supplies, desks, and pay teachers' salaries. The taxes used for this purpose currently are not keeping pace with the enrollment. Unfortunately, both of these questions were defeated by the voters. The School Board did vote to put the same questions back on the ballot for the March 1994 elections. Whereupon, the building issue passed. Ground was broken September 15, 1994 for the new building, with a target date for occupation to be August of 1995.

Recently, the Elementary Education Foundation was formed. The Foundation's purpose is to enhance the school district's educational opportunities and strengthen the partnership between the community and the schools. The Foundation hopes to do this by generating and distributing resources not obtained by tax support.

The Foundation's goal is to be able to support enrichment programs and activities in science and art, provide state-of-the-art equipment and labs, and to offer special instructional opportunities to parents, staff, and students. The Foundation is comprised of a group of local, private citizens and is not part of the school district. However, the Board of Education encouraged the formation of the Foundation and is supportive of its efforts.

State and National Context of Problem

Nationally, the need to educate children in safety strategies is evident. The faces of missing children have been printed on milk cartons and posted in supermarkets. Programs have been instituted in many states and communities to trace abducted children. Elementary schools have asked local police departments to fingerprint students in the hope that the fingerprints will be useful if the child is reported missing or kidnapped (Garvey, 1988).

It can no longer be assumed children are safe when playing in their yards or spending the day at the mall with their parents. In December of 1993, two young girls were kidnapped from different suburbs in northern St. Louis County. They were later found dead. In Liverpool, England, a toddler was lured away from a shopping mall and later killed by two juvenile boys.

In a recent telecast of the Oprah Winfrey Show entitled Teach Your Kids How to Protect Themselves, child safety expert, Kenneth Wooden, advised parents and educators to teach children what enticements and lures child molesters and abductors use and how to protect themselves from succumbing to the lures (Oprah Winfrey Show, 1993). Mr. Wooden developed a child safety program for schools and a video "Think First, Stay Safe".

The program is based on years of research, including interviews with hundreds of convicted child molesters, pimps and murderers, who revealed the lures they had used to entice their victims (Wooden, 1986).

In May of 1990, the U. S. Department of Justice released a study reporting that in 1988 there were as many as 114,600 abductions of children by non-family members, 4,600 abductions by non-family members reported to the police, and 300 abductions by non-family members where children were gone for long periods of time or murdered. The National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMAART) collected data from six separate sources:

- *Household Survey
- *Juvenile Facilities
- *Returned Runaway Study
- *Police Records Study
- *FBI Data Reanalysis
- *Community Professionals Study

The following nationwide estimates were compiled for 1988 in the area of non-family abductions:

- *Children aged 1 to 11 experienced most of the attempts.
- *Most involved attempts to lure children into cars rather than attempts to take or detain.
- *74 percent of the victims were girls.

*62 percent of the perpetrators were strangers and 19 percent were acquaintances.

*Most were abducted from the street (52 percent) and taken into a vehicle (46 percent).

*Force was used against 87 percent of the victims.

*A weapon was involved in 75 percent of the cases.

*Ransom was requested in 8 percent of the cases.

(U.S. Department of Justice: Fact Sheet on Missing Children, 1990).

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children states the national context of the problem. "As a society our efforts to prevent crimes against children have not kept pace with the increasing vulnerability of our young citizens" (p. 1).

Chapter 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Problem Evidence

Today's children are growing up in an increasingly dangerous world. The threat of stranger abduction is present now more than ever. Daily media headlines remind us that children live with the constant threat of being mistreated or abducted. Gathered evidence indicates that young children are not aware of additional strategies needed to help keep them safe from possible abduction.

In order to document the lack of strategies to deal with the dangers of stranger contact and possibilities of abduction, the elementary school teachers, parents, and targeted students were surveyed. The Teacher Survey (See Appendix A) questioned teachers concerning their own awareness of abduction-safety strategies and knowledge of programs currently available to teach these strategies to children. In addition, the survey assessed the classroom teachers' feelings about their own students' awareness and skills.

The Parent Survey (See Appendices B and C) addressed parents' awareness of the safety knowledge their child possesses. The survey consisted of four scenarios presenting possible lures used by abductors. Parents were asked to choose the multiple-choice response they felt best predicted what their child's response to the same scenario would be.

Student information was gathered through personal interview. (See Appendix D) Children were shown a video of abduction scenarios, stopping short of the correct responses.

The student was asked what the child in each situation should do and then asked to support their answer. Statistics were compiled using these surveys and interviews.

TABLE I
Results of Parent Survey
Grades K, 2ND, 4TH
Percent responding to each response:

Scenario	Responses:	A (Unsafe)	B (Very Safe)	C (Adequately Safe)	D (Other)
Department Store (authority lure)		34	45	11	10
Lost Puppy (assistance lure)		23	55	18	5
Mall (overpowerment)		1	50	39	10
Vehicle (assistance lure)		8	60	26	8
Total % responding :		17	52	23	8

For meaning of responses letter, please see survey. (Appendix C)

Statistics gathered from the parent surveys revealed that 52 percent of those responding felt that their children would react in the safest manner listed. One has to think that this is a misperception and open to question.

The responses indicate that most parents felt that they had adequately prepared their child for common stranger encounters, such as a stranger encounter in the mall or a person in a suspicious vehicle. They were not as confident in their child's ability to react safely when faced with a lure involving an authority figure.

Most parents responding to D, other response, felt their child would respond by seeking out the parent or another responsible adult.

In reviewing the responses by grade levels, parents of kindergarten students felt their children would compliantly go with an abductor if they thought the abductor needed assistance, or was a person of authority; while parents of older students felt their children were better prepared to resist abduction.

TABLE II
Results of Student Survey on Abduction
Percent responding to each scenario:

Scenario	Response:	Unsafe				Very Safe				Adequately Safe			
		K	2	4	T	K	2	4	T	K	2	4	T
Vehicle (assistance lure)		67	52	32	50	0	9	20	10	33	39	48	40
Mall (overpowerment)		71	78	44	64	0	5	16	7	29	17	40	29
Hospital (emergency lure)		79	61	28	56	0	0	16	5	21	39	56	39
Department Store (authority lure)		92	100	60	84	0	0	24	8	8	0	16	8

For explanation of very safe, adequately safe, and unsafe, see Appendix E.

Looking at Table II, one can conclude that the children do not have adequate strategies to deal with stranger confrontation. Although all grade levels indicated that children lacked these skills, they were better informed about the common lure involving a suspicious vehicle than the other lures.

Looking at the difference in kindergarten, second and fourth grade responses, one could also conclude that as students mature, they become more aware of their world and the possible danger of abduction. However, one re-occurring response among fourth grade students was the misconception that they could overpower their abductor. This is an indication that all students, regardless of age, need to improve their skills.

TABLE III
Teacher Survey
Percent of responses to the following questions:

	Very Aware	Somewhat Aware	Not Aware	
Are you aware of the skills needed to prevent abduction?	24	72	4	
	Yes	No	No Opinion	
Do you feel it is important to teach students the skills to prevent abduction?	92	0	8	
	< 25%	25 - 50 %	51 - 75%	>75%
Estimate the percentage of your students you feel have adequate prevention skills.	32	24	28	8

Teachers responses revealed that they were somewhat aware of skills that their students would need to prevent abduction and they felt it was important to teach these skills.

As they reflected on the abilities they felt their students already possessed, the greatest percentage of the teachers felt that less than 25 percent of the children in their classrooms could respond safely to the threat of abduction.

PROBABLE CAUSE

The literature suggests several underlying causes for lack of strategies to deal with strangers. According to the Illinois Police Parent's Guide to Abduction (1993) children do not put the same emphasis on suspicious activity as adults. Therefore, they are more likely to fall prey to unwanted stranger advances or encounters. Children may not understand that a stranger is not always "evil" looking, but may look like an everyday person.

Children may also lack strategies because parents want children to be safe, but tend to refrain from teaching detailed strategies for fear of frightening their children. Parents wonder, "How do I talk to my children about this? How do I strike the right balance between frightening them unnecessarily and warning them in a way that might protect them against a real threat?" (Garvey, 1988)

Child lure expert, Ken Wooden (1988) suggests that many parents simply do not believe that their children are at risk, and fail to provide them with safety strategies. It may be this type of thinking that leaves the children vulnerable, or unable to deal with stranger encounters.

Children's respect for adults or authority figures could also be an underlying cause of their inability to respond appropriately when approached by a stranger. According to Wooden (1988), abductors take advantage of children's respect for authority. The offenders often dress like policemen, clergymen, or firefighters, to gain a child's trust. Children may lack the ability to distinguish between the real authority figures, and the person who may cause them harm.

Most abductors attempt to establish a relationship with a child. Often elaborate lures are used to entice children. Parents and children have not been alerted to these effective techniques, which makes them highly susceptible to possible abduction (Poche, Yoder, Miltenberger, 1988). This may be yet another reason that children do not know what to do when approached by someone they don't know.

The lack of a safety education program in some school systems may be another contributing factor to the lack of strategies children possess in dealing with the possibility of stranger danger. State and local schools do not require that a safety program dealing with abduction and enticements be taught. This may be due to the unavailability of reliable safety programs, relating to abduction, for school use, as noted by Poche, Yoder, and Miltenberger (1988) in the article, Teaching Self Protection to Children Using Television Techniques. There are very few experimentally validated programs available to teach young children appropriate responses to the enticements of potential abductors. Those programs that are available commercially, have left many parents and school districts skeptical of their accuracy and effectiveness. (Roberts, Alexander, and Fanurick, 1990)

Other probable causes may include:

- *Lack of parental guidance with the issue.
- *Parents have outdated assumptions about child safety.
- *Teachers assume child safety is being taught at home.
- *Parents believe child safety strategies are being taught at school.

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature suggests two major areas to address in solving the problem of a lack of strategies to deal with the possibilities of abduction. The primary area of concern is in educating those who are at risk, the children. The secondary area of concentration is in educating the people responsible for training the children, their parents and educators.

Upon researching possible solutions for educating the children, there were many avenues to consider. Role playing techniques, video tape training and lessons on decision-making strategies were among the most critical.

Instruction by video tape provides students with scenarios with strangers portrayed by professional actors. Pauses are provided within the tape to allow for interactive responses from the viewer. Discussion is guided by an adult to elicit the correct response.

Video tape instruction was an effective teaching tool, with children retaining the information one month after completion of the training. The video tape technique has the advantages of convenience and standardization that are difficult to attain with other methods (Poche et al., 1988).

Role playing is an active participation of students in the problem solving process. Students explore problems by acting out guided problem situations, and then discussing the enactment.

Active learning has proven to be an effective tool in the retention of skills. The strongest evidence, in the literature consulted, supported the role playing technique. There is a great difference between the concepts children attain and the actual skills they possess. Children need to practice the skills they acquire, as they are not fully protected solely by being aware of the safety concepts. (Kraizer, Witte, Fryer 1989). In a study by Fryer, Kraizer, and Myoshi (1987), it was found, by using simulation techniques, there was total recall six months after the final program participation. Role playing gives children a way to experiment with possible high-risk situations, creating a basis for confident decision making (Fryer et al. 1987).

Decision-making strategies are the foundation for any program designed to teach self-protection. Studies suggest that because so few abductors use physical force to obtain their victims, teaching children critical thinking skills to resist inducements, and to react quickly, may be an effective way of preventing abduction (Poche et al., 1988).

Critical thinking components such as attributing, drawing conclusions, determining cause/effect and evaluating the situation are used to reach the complex level of thinking needed to make assertive decisions (Fogarty & Bellanca, 1991). The literature suggests that parents and teachers need to become aware of the prevention techniques that work, in order to protect children (Kraizer et al., 1989). They need to also be aware of how to educate with an approach that is simple, direct, factual, and positive so as not to unduly frighten the child (Wishon & Broderius, 1987).

Project Outcomes and Solution Components

As a result of implementation of a child safety curriculum, a parent newsletter, and a school safety fair, during the period of November 1994 to January 1995, the targeted primary students at the elementary school will have an increased awareness and ability to use strategies needed to deal with the possibility of abductions, as measured by student survey and teacher observation checklist.

In order to implement the terminal objective stated, the following components will be included:

1. A child safety abduction unit will be created and administered to the targeted students.
2. A parent newsletter will be developed and distributed to parents.
3. At the conclusion of this unit, a school-wide safety fair will be held.

Action Plan for the Intervention

I. Implementation of a Child Safety Unit

- A. Timeline: This unit should be completed in approximately two to three weeks.
- B. Components: This unit will include six objectives to provide safety strategies for elementary students, if faced with the possibility of abduction. Activities are listed to meet each objective.
 - I. Objective: Students will be able to identify a stranger as any person they do not know well or at all. Activities include:
 - a. Constructing a K-W-L on strangers. Students will list what they already know, what they want to know, and, finally, what they have learned from the unit on strangers.
 - b. Reading the book The Berenstain Bears Learn About Strangers by Jan and Stan Berenstain.
 - c. Creating a class safety book. The students will each make a page for the book answering the question, What is a Stranger? They may use illustrations and words or sentences to convey the idea of what a stranger is.

- d. Playing "Am I a Stranger?" role play game. The students will role play different characters, such as the mail carrier, the neighbor down the street, or Aunt Mary. The students should try to determine whether the person could be a stranger.
- e. Constructing a stranger T-chart to list the things a stranger is and the things a stranger is not.

A Stranger Is

A Stranger is Not

- 2. Objective: Students will identify a situation in which a safety decision must be made. Activities include:
 - a. Brainstorming ways that strangers, or other people, can make you feel uncomfortable or scared. Example: calling to you, following you, or asking for help.
 - b. Brainstorming ideas on how to get away from these uncomfortable or scary situations. Example: move away, yell for help, return to parent or other trusted adult.
 - c. Reviewing the list and deciding, as a class, which solutions are most appropriate in each situation. Example: You might not yell for help if someone is standing too close. You may want to return to a trusted adult.

d. Instructing students on specific strategies if they are not named in prior discussions:

- * Yell loudly if grabbed. Make a commotion!
- * Walk in opposite direction of approaching car.
- * Walk in groups whenever possible.
- * Pre-arrange a meeting spot in case you are separated from your parents in a public place.
- * Have a family code word for use in case of emergencies or if someone new will be picking you up.
- * Use "No, Go, Tell Strategy" (Watson, Bain & Houghton, 1992).

1. No - The student is to say , "No", toward the stranger presenting the lure in a firm and definite manner.
2. Go - The student is to move away from the person quickly.
3. Tell - The student is to report the incident to a known, safe adult.

3. Objective: Students will make a safety decision based on the situation. Activities include:

- a. Discussing and practicing decision making skills through role play

- b. Role play making safety decisions by playing the "What If?" game. Students will be given a "what if" situation, then asked to make a decision based on the situation.

Example: What if you were playing in the park and a nicely dressed person asked you to help find a lost puppy. What would you do?

- c. Responding to a scenario video which will give students an opportunity to assess a situation and make a safety decision.
- d. Working in cooperative groups to perform various scenarios, in which someone is approached by a stranger and a safety decision must be made.
- e. Creating safety posters and slogans to teach others about safety from strangers.

- 4. Objective: Students will become familiar with the common child lures: Activities include:

- a. Discussing the common child lures with students.

(Wooden, 1988) These lures include:

***Affection/Love Lure**

This lure involves love or attention given to a child in hopes of gaining their trust.

***Assistance Lure**

This lure involves the abductor asking for help. Requests can include asking to carry packages or helping to find a lost pet.

***Authority Lure**

This lure involves taking advantage of a child's respect for authority by dressing like the police or clergy, then approaching the child.

***Bribery Lure**

This lure involves offering candy or gifts to a child.

***Ego/Fame Lure**

This lure involves promising a modeling job or the chance to compete in a beauty contest as an enticement.

***Emergency Lure**

The emergency lure is used to disarm, confuse and worry the child. Example: "Your mommy is sick! Come with me!"

***Heroes Lure**

This lure involves the abductor dressing as a childhood hero such as Big Bird or the Easter Bunny to capture a child's attention.

***Jobs Lure**

This lure involves attracting a child by offering a high paying or interesting job.

5. Objective: Students will become familiar with safety measures to use in the case of an emergency. (Hoyt, 1994)

Activities include:

- a. Instructing students of the 911 emergency system.
 - b. Practicing emergency or 911 calls through role playing activities.
6. Objective: Students will state their full name, address, phone number with area code, and parent's name. Activities include:
- a. Making an "All About Me" book which will include their name, phone number with area code, address, and parent's name. The book will also include a current picture and fingerprints if possible. The child's current height and weight will also be included.
 - b. Using songs, poems, and rhymes to encourage memorization of important personal data.
- C. Evaluation: The evaluation tool used to assess this unit will be a pretest-posttest involving video scenarios, rubric to assess unit activities, and knowledge of personal information.

II. Development of a Parent Newsletter

- A. Timeline: This newsletter will be developed and distributed to parents at the conclusion of this child safety unit.

B. Components: This parent newsletter will include safety tips that will remind parents what to do to help keep their children safe. This newsletter will also include an overview of the Child Safety Unit that was completed at school. In addition to these items, an invitation to the Child Safety Fair, which will be held in conjunction with the safety unit, will be included.

C. Evaluation: The evaluation tool used to assess this newsletter will be a questionnaire/survey sent home with the newsletter to be completed by the parent and returned to school.

III. Organization of a Safety Fair

A. Timeline: This Safety Fair will be held as a conclusion to the unit.

B. Components: This Safety Fair will include organizations displaying information about child safety and awareness. Also included will be a display of the student work completed and compiled during the safety unit, as well as videos of students role playing the lures and scenarios.

C. Evaluation: The evaluation tool used to assess the Safety Fair will be a questionnaire distributed to all parents, teachers and administrators.

Methods of Assessment

Assessment of this project includes an evaluation of the completed unit, the parent newsletter and the Safety Fair.

The safety unit will be assessed through the use of a pretest-posttest as well as rubrics to assess unit activities, and knowledge of personal information.

Assessment of the parent newsletter will be done through a survey distributed to parents within the newsletter.

The Safety Fair will be assessed through the use of a questionnaire distributed to all adults in attendance.

Chapter 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase student awareness and ability to use strategies needed to deal with the possibility of abduction. The implementation of a safety unit, distribution of a parent informational newsletter, and the organization of a safety fair, were selected to effect the desired changes.

The child safety abduction curriculum was created and administered to provide specific strategies needed to deal with the possibility of abduction. The period of instruction varied at each targeted grade level. Original designs called for a two to three week period of study. However, upon implementation of this curriculum, it was found that four to six weeks were required.

To introduce the curriculum, the students developed a description of a stranger, through the use of graphic organizers. The book, The Berenstain Bears Learn About Strangers, was presented to the classes in video form to further enhance their description. Safety books were created by the classes, with each child contributing a page titled, "What is a Stranger?". (See Appendix F) Using their description, the students made decisions in role play situations to determine if the person represented presented a danger to them.

Continuing the role play technique, students were called upon to use their decision making skills to assess a dangerous or threatening situation and determine which solution may be appropriate.

At this time, the children brainstormed strategies that could be employed in a dangerous situation. Using their ideas, specific strategies were taught to enable the children to avoid potentially dangerous encounters. This role play technique proved a successful teaching tool and was used in cooperative learning groups to continue the practice. Students were assigned to groups in the second week of study and randomly selected situations depicting lures previously discussed in class. The students then presented those situations to their classmates.

Students were given further opportunities to assess situations by viewing scenarios on a video, stopping short of the correct solutions. After voicing their choice of strategies, the correct actions were shown and comparisons discussed.

In the third week of study, the children were given the opportunity to create safety posters to encourage safe behavior among their peers. These posters were displayed throughout the school, and used at a later date to decorate for the Safety Fair. (See Appendix G)

The teacher, through direct instruction, prepared the students to deal with possible abduction by making them aware of the eight most commonly used lures. The Ken Wooden video, "Think First, Stay Safe", was used at this time to demonstrate each lure in detail. Discussion followed, with some role play activities reinforcing appropriate strategies to prevent abduction in those situations.

The main focus of this curriculum was to teach children preventative strategies against abduction. Should this event unfortunately occur, students were also instructed in the use of the telephone system to place a long distance call, and the importance of knowing personal information including full name, parent's name, and complete address.

The 911 system is available to students living in this district. Instruction in the use of this system was given to all targeted children. Using a telephone, students were asked to role play an emergency call to 911. Teachers assessed the student's knowledge of correct 911 procedures, the giving of their name, address, type of emergency, and remembering to stay on the line. (See Appendix H)

Parents were an important part of this curriculum, offering input and support through questionnaires and surveys. A major newsletter was developed and distributed to parents at the conclusion of the safety unit. (See Appendix I) It presented an overview of the unit taught, a list of the most common abduction lures used, and an additional tip sheet of safety precautions. (See Appendix J) In this same newsletter, parents were invited to attend a Safety Fair as a culminating activity. (See Appendix K)

The Safety Fair was organized to present an opportunity for area organizations and public servants to contribute to the safety education of the students in our school district. Sixty letters of invitation were sent to prospective participants, (See Appendix L), with fifteen responding to participate. Each presenter was supplied a table, electricity if needed, and the use of audio-visual equipment. The organizations participating represented three Law Enforcement Departments, including a K-9 unit, two local hospitals, emergency medical and fire services, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, The American Heart Association, The Department of Children and Family Services, The Independent Order of Forresters, and the School District's current drug awareness program, "Here's Looking at you 2000."

A broad spectrum of safety issues was addressed at this fair including poison control, home and fire safety, bicycle safety and registration, photo identification with fingerprinting, as well as suggestions for living a prudent and healthy lifestyle.

All participating agencies provided information through elaborate displays. Many provided educational handouts for adults as well as children, and exciting promotional items, such as bandaid holders, key chains, magnets, stickers, and police officer trading cards.

A local fire department donated smoke alarms and a fire extinguisher as door prizes. Names were drawn for the prizes from those registering at that booth. The Independent Order of Foresters photographed and fingerprinted over one hundred and ninety children. This is a free service that offers families a packet of personal information, along with a current photograph and fingerprints of their child. The local police department registered one hundred and seven bicycles, making this their most successful registration event to date.

The local newspaper provided publicity before and after the Safety Fair. (See Appendix M) The Fair was open to the public for two hours and thirty minutes. During that time, there were approximately three hundred and fifty people in attendance. Of those attending, forty-five families completed a survey evaluating this event. (See Appendix N)

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of the safety unit intervention, each child was asked to respond to three specific areas in the safety curriculum. Rubrics were designed to assess their knowledge of personal information, their ability to respond in an emergency situation using the 911 emergency phone system, and their reactions to attempted abduction scenarios. (See Appendices E and H)

TABLE IV
Results of Rubric Assessments
Grades K, 2ND, 4TH
Percent of students responding:

Assessment Response:		Unsafe	Very Safe	Adequately Safe
Personal Information Rubric	K	21	13	66
	2	0	100	0
	4	0	96	4
	T	7	69	24
911 Rubric	K	4	42	54
	2	0	74	26
	4	0	80	20
	T	2	65	33
Role-play Rubric	K	13	63	25
	2	0	87	13
	4	0	72	28
	T	4	74	22

For an explanation of rubric criteria see Appendices E and H.

The intervention appears to have had a positive effect on all targeted students. The collected data showed that the second and fourth grade students had greater retention of personal information than the kindergarten students. Memorization of the area code was difficult for kindergarten students, perhaps due to their limited understanding of long distance telephoning. This factor lowered the total percentages in this assessment.

In assessing the understanding of appropriate behaviors in reporting emergencies and possible abduction attempts through the use of the 911 system, 98 percent of the children exhibited adequately safe behaviors. This indicates that this

objective of the curriculum was successful in preparing children to react appropriately to an emergency/abduction situation.

When responding to one of the four original scenarios, (See Table II), in a role play situation, 74 percent of the students exhibited very safe behaviors as compared to the best percentage of 10 percent in the original survey. Very few, only 4 percent of the targeted population, exhibited unsafe behaviors after the intervention. In the original survey, at least 50 percent of the children showed unsafe behavior when confronted with an abduction scenario.

TABLE V
Newsletter Survey
Percent responding to each question:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
Do you think that your child is better prepared to handle an encounter with a stranger because of the safety unit completed at school?	98	0	2
Has this newsletter provided you with additional information that may be useful in discussing safety issues with your child?	91	2	7

The results of the newsletter survey, (See Appendix O), distributed to parents of the targeted students, were very supportive of the intervention strategies. Results showed 98 percent of those responding felt that their child was better prepared to handle an encounter with a stranger. Results also showed that the safety information provided to parents was appreciated. Comments indicated that the parents were thankful for the avenue of communication opened to them through the teaching of this

safety unit. Parents related that it gave them cause to speak to all family members about abduction and to reinforce concepts taught to those targeted children.

TABLE VI
Safety Fair Survey
Percent responding to each question:

Has the Safety Fair been helpful in providing you with child safety information?	<u>Yes</u> 100	<u>No</u> 0	<u>No Opinion</u> 0
Please rate the Safety Fair in terms of how the information provided might help you educate your child in the area of child safety.	<u>Very Helpful</u> 89	<u>Somewhat Helpful</u> 21	<u>Not Helpful</u> 0

Those attending the Safety Fair were asked to complete a survey evaluating the event. (See Appendix N) One hundred percent of those responding felt that the Fair was helpful in providing information for child safety. In response to the question concerning information to help parents educate their child, 89 percent felt that the information provided was very helpful, but failed to comment on ways to improve the presentation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on safety strategies to prevent abduction, the students showed a marked improvement in their awareness and ability to use these strategies. They are more aware of the personal information needed to identify themselves to authorities or other trusted adults. Students demonstrated a better knowledge of the 911 telephone system and its usage.

The children showed a great improvement in their ability to make a long distance telephone call, using the 1 plus area code access numbers.

As the unit of study drew to a close, it was very rewarding to see the community support of the program. This was evidenced by the terrific response to the Safety Fair, and the resulting communications with safety personnel in the community. It has been suggested that this Safety Fair become a yearly event, with some presenters already reserving a spot for the year to come.

In retrospect, there are minor changes that could possibly improve the research and yield more accurate results. The Parent Survey, (See Appendix C), should have questioned parents about the exact scenarios to be viewed by their children during the Student Interview. (See Appendix D) It would have been interesting to compare their predictions with the child's actual response.

The research was designed to evaluate the interventions through the use of rubrics as well as a post-test. Upon completion of the unit of study, it was found that the post-test would not accurately assess their knowledge, since the scenarios to be used had been part of the curriculum. Children had been given the correct responses. It was felt that the role play assessments adequately provided the information needed.

It is the opinion of the researchers that this unit of intervention has successfully met the goals set at the onset. Children are better prepared to make decisions that affect their daily lives, as well as their safety and well-being. It has been a satisfying and rewarding experience to share in the safety education of these children.

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Appendices

Appendix A

TEACHER SURVEY

1. Are you aware of the skills students need to prevent abduction?

☐ Very Aware ☐ Somewhat Aware ☐ Not At All Aware

2. Do you feel it is important to teach students the skills to prevent abduction?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion

3. Please list three (3) skills you feel your students should have to deal with the possibility of abduction.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. Please estimate how many students at your grade level you feel possess the skills you listed above.

☐ less than 25%

☐ 25%-50%

☐ 51%-75%

☐ 76%-100%

5. Are the skills you listed in number 3 currently being taught as part of your grade level curriculum?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Are you aware of any programs available to instruct students in the prevention of abduction. (If yes, please list the program or publisher)

☐ Yes

☐ No

Thank you for your time.

Appendix B

September 18, 1994

Dear Parents:

Safety for your children and our students is important to us as educators. To better prepare your children in the case of stranger contact, we are planning to implement a stranger safety program in the kindergarten, second and fourth grades. This program will include lessons to teach your child what a stranger is and how to protect themselves if approached by a stranger. Common lures used to entice children will also be discussed.

As part of this unit we are asking parents to respond to the attached survey. We would like to identify the areas where children are knowledgeable, and where additional strategies may need to be taught.

Please take time to fill in this survey as accurately as possible. All responses will be confidential, and no surveys will be singled out. This information will be analyzed collectively from the group surveyed. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Breese
Mrs. James
Mrs. Johnson
Mrs. Robinson

PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY TOMORROW!

Appendix C

Parent Survey

Please respond to the following scenarios with the response you feel your child would most likely make in each situation. Circle only one response for each scenario.

1. Your child is approached in a department store by a man who displays a badge and says: "We have had some problems with recent thefts in this store. Would you please come with me?" Your child would:

- A. Go with the man.
- B. Run away from the man and tell a clerk.
- C. Stay and discuss the situation with the man.
- D. Other response. Please explain.

2. Your child is playing in the park and is approached by a kind person carrying a dog leash. The person shows your child a photo of a dog and asks your child to please help look for the lost pet. The person motions for your child to follow, calling for the dog. Your child would:

- A. Follow the person and help look for the dog.
- B. Run away to find an adult he/she knows.
- C. Refuse to go with the person and continue to play.
- D. Other response. Please explain.

3. A person approaches your child in the mall and grabs their arm, pulling your child towards the exit. Your child's response would be:

- A. Scream "Let go of me. Stop! I don't want to go."
- B. Scream "Help! You are not my (dad, mom, brother, etc.)."
- C. Compliantly go with the stranger.
- D. Other response. Please explain.

4. A person in a vehicle park at the curb motions and calls for your child to come over to the vehicle. The person shows your child a map and asks for directions to a local street or landmark. Your child:

- A. Approaches the car and looks at the man, trying to be helpful.
- B. Does not approach, but continues to talk and try to help with the directions.
- C. Responds, "I will get an adult to help you" and runs in the opposite direction than the car is facing.
- D. Other response. Please explain.

Student Interview

1. Name your full name.
3. Tell your address. (Include street, city, and state)
3. Tell your phone number, with the area code.
4. Name your parent's full name.
5. Describe a stranger.

Please respond to the following questions as the safety video is viewed.

Scenario 1: What do you think the boy in the video should do now? Why do you think that?

Scenario 2: What should the girl in the shopping mall do now? Please explain why you think that.

Scenario 3: What do you think the boy in the video should do? Please explain your answer.

Scenario 4: What do you think the girl in the store should do? Please explain why you think that.

Appendix E

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

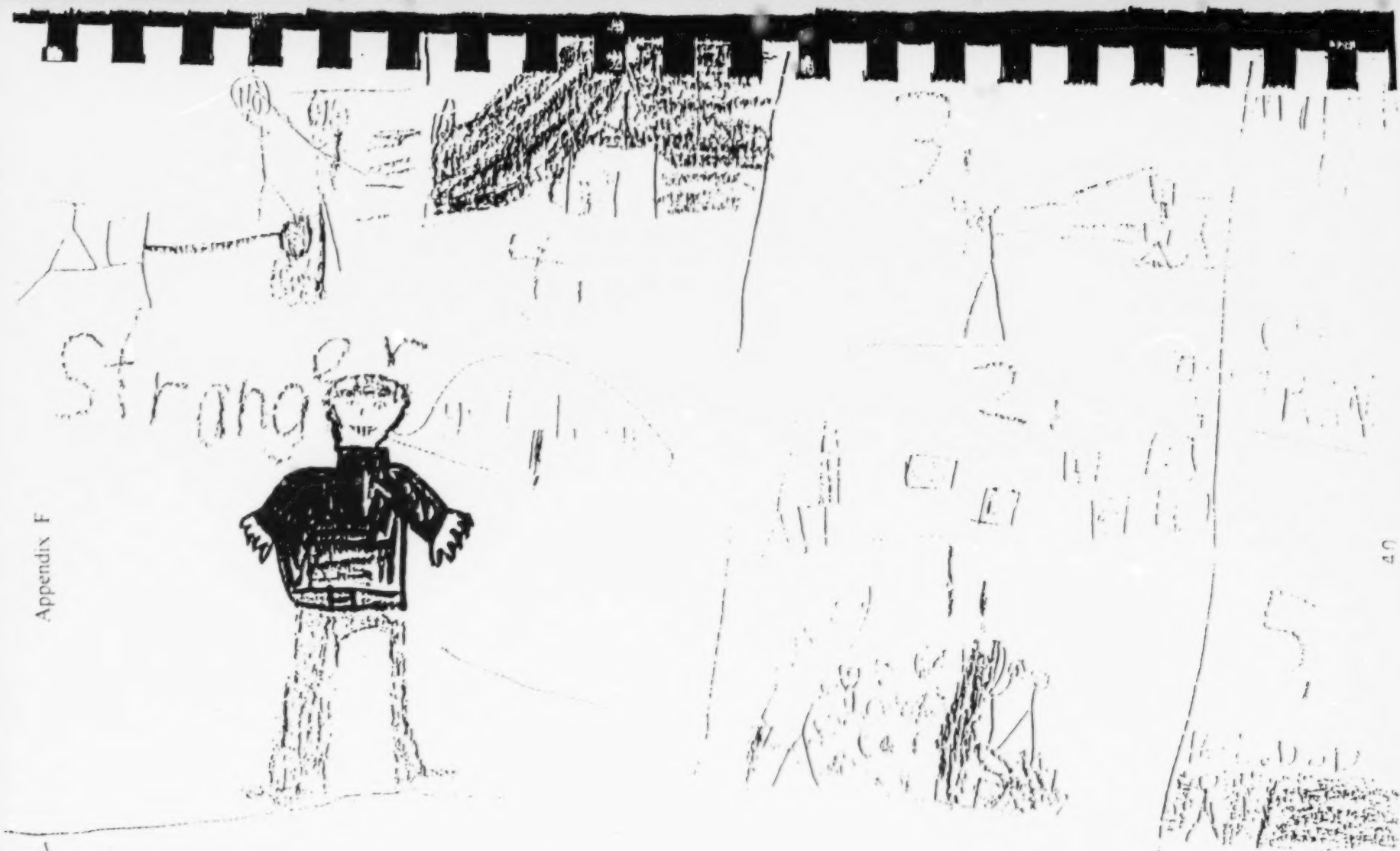
ROLE PLAY RUBRIC

Role Play Activity: _____

3 _____ 2 _____ 1

VERY SAFE BEHAVIOR	ADEQUATELY SAFE BEHAVIOR	UNSAFE BEHAVIOR
-----------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| *Tells the stranger "no" in a firm and definite manner. | *May not tell the stranger "no", but moves away quickly. | *Student fails to say "no" Lingers or responds to the stranger. |
| *Moves away quickly. (within 10 seconds.) | *Reports incident to a known safe adult. | *Keeps the incident to themselves. |
| *Reports the incident to a known, safe adult. | | |



A stranger is anyone you don't know

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



ONLY TALK TO PEOPLE
YOU KNOW

by: Stephanie

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION RUBRIC

3 _____ 2 _____ 1

VERY SAFE
BEHAVIOR

can identify:
*full name
*full address
*telephone #
with area code

ADEQUATELY
SAFE BEHAVIOR

can identify:
*full name
*full address
*telephone #
no area code

UNSAFE
BEHAVIOR

can identify:
*first name only
*only street
*no telephone
information

911 RUBRIC

3 _____ 2 _____ 1

VERY SAFE
BEHAVIOR

*stays on line
*knows personal
a.name
b address
c.telephone #
*tells type of
emergency

ADEQUATELY
SAFE BEHAVIOR

*stays on line
*knows name only
*tells type of
emergency

UNSAFE
BEHAVIOR

*unaware of 911
system
*does not tell of
emergency.

Appendix I

Dear Parents:

Recently, your child participated in a special unit of study on Stranger Safety. The unit included specific strategies your child can use if ever faced with a stranger encounter. The unit opened with a discussion of what a stranger is. Students concluded that a stranger is not necessarily an evil looking person, but simply a person they do not know.

Students also learned the "No, Go, Tell" strategy. This strategy teaches children to firmly shout "No" when approached by a stranger, "Go" to a known or trusted adult quickly and "Tell" the adult about the encounter. This strategy was reinforced through role playing activities. It is proven that children retain and use what they have practiced so role play activities strengthen any safety skills learned. Role play can be done at home. Approach your child as if you are a stranger and see what he or she has learned. Reinforce the proper way to respond.

Finally, students were made aware of common lures abductors use to entice children. These lures are listed on the attached tip sheet along with some additional safety tips. Safety for our children is an important goal for all of us. We hope you find this information useful in educating your child further on stranger safety issues. Please contact us at school if you have any questions. 624-8585

Sincerely,

Julie Breese
Valerie James
Gail Johnson
Connie Robinson

STRANGER SAFETY TIPS

- * Children should know what a stranger is. A stranger is not necessarily an evil looking person. A stranger is simply any person you do not know.

- * Children should use the "No. Go. Tell" strategy when faced with a stranger encounter. This strategy teaches children to firmly shout "No" when approached by a stranger "Go" tell a known or trusted adult, and "Tell" the adult of the encounter.

- * Reinforce the "No. Go. Tell" strategy at home through role playing activities. Role play that you are the stranger. Encourage the use of the "No. Go Tell" strategy.

- * Children should yell loudly when approached by a stranger. Make a commotion. Say exactly what is happening.

Example: "This is not my dad!"
"This is not my mom!"
"Help! I'm being kidnapped!"

(If children just scream, people may think they are throwing a tantrum.)

- * A car or other vehicle is often the means by which the abductor removes a child from a neighborhood. Children should immediately walk in the opposite direction of an approaching car.

- * Children should walk in groups whenever possible. Abductors wait for opportunities when children are alone.

- * Have a family code word for use in case of emergencies or if someone new will be picking up your child.

- * Teach children their full name, their parents' full name, their address and their phone number with area code.

- * Teach your child the emergency 9-1-1 phone call system.

- * Prearrange a meeting spot in case you and your child get separated in a public place.

Dear Students and Parents:

You are invited to attend a Children's Safety Fair, on Wednesday, March 29, 1995. The safety fair will be held in the all-purpose room at Stephen Mack Middle School.

Several police and fire departments, as well as other organizations that are concerned with children's safety, will have booths and displays for you to look at. Many of the participants will be providing free safety pamphlets, booklets and other information that may be helpful to you. There will be popcorn and juice for all who stop by to visit us at our Children's Safety Fair, Wednesday, March 29, 4- 6:30 p.m., in the all-purpose room at Stephen Mack Middle School.

We hope to see you there! If you have any questions, or would like more information, contact:

Mrs. Breese
Mrs. James
Mrs. Gail Johnson
Mrs. Robinson
Rockton Grade School
Teachers, 624-8585

P.S. The South Beloit Police Dept. is bringing their mascot, a beautiful Dalmatian for all to see.

February 21, 1995

Dear Sir or Madam:

We are in the process of planning a childrens' safety fair for our elementary school district.

We are looking for participants who can provide safety information or services to our students and parents. We would welcome booths or displays dealing with safety issues our young children face today, such as:

stranger danger	fingerprinting & identification
fire prevention and safety	health & fitness
poison control	first aid methods
911 information	general safety

The safety fair will be held on Wednesday, March 29, 1995.

3-4:00 p.m. To set up booths.

4-6:00 p.m. Booths open to students & parents.

Please contact us by March 10, if you are able to send a representative to participate, or if you know of anyone else we should contact. Making our children aware of the many dangers they face in their young lives is a very important task. We hope you will provide them with some of the additional information they need to stay safe.

Thank you for your consideration,

Julie Breese
Connie Robinson
Valeria James
Gail Johnson
Teachers

c/o Rockton Grade School
400 East Chapel Street
Rockton, Illinois 61072
815-624-3585

North Suburban Herald

March 22, 1995

Volume 120, Number 12

An award winning newspaper serving Rockton and Roscoe

75¢

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Appendix M

Children's Safety Fair set for March 29

ROCKTON - As spring arrives and children are outdoors more, several Rockton Grade School teachers are sponsoring a Children's Safety Fair from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 29 in the all purpose room at Stephen Mack Middle School.

Several police and fire departments will have personnel in their booths to distribute booklets and talk with the children.

The South Beloit Police Department is bringing their mascot, a Dalmatian, for the children to enjoy.

There will be popcorn and juice for everyone attending the fair.

The event is under the direction of Rockton grade school teachers Julie Breese, Val James, Gail Johnson and Connie Robinson.

Herald

Wednesday, April 5, 1995

Education

Safety Fair winners announced

ROCKTON - Winners of the fire extinguishers given as attendance prizes at the Safety Fair at Stephen Mack Middle School were Jack Keenan, RGS secretary Donna Granath and Robbin Fleming who won smoke detectors, and teacher Mary

Newman whose name was drawn for a fire extinguisher.

Fair organizers were very pleased with the turnout and are already making plans for the Second Annual Safety Fair.

Rockton Fire Department says thanks

To the Editor:

We would like to thank the committee that organized the Children's Safety Fair that was held at Stephen Mack Middle School on Wednesday, Mar. 29. Local Police, Fire, Hospital and Children's organizations were in attendance to help educate our young community on safety issues. We commend the individuals who worked to make this event a great success and look forward to participating in the fair next year.

Rockton Fire Department Personnel

SAFETY FAIR SURVEY

Please answer the following questions regarding this safety fair, and place the survey in the designated box as you leave. Thank you.

1. Has this safety fair been helpful in providing you with child safety information?

____ Yes

____ No

____ No Opinion

Comments: _____

2. Please rate this safety fair in terms of how the information provided might help you educate your child in the area of child safety.

____ Very Helpful

____ Somewhat Helpful

____ Not
Helpful

Comments: _____

Newsletter Survey

Please answer the following questions regarding this newsletter, and return this survey to school. Thank you for your time!

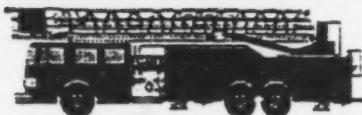
Do you think that your child is better prepared to handle an encounter with a stranger because of the unit completed at school? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion

Comments: _____

Has this newsletter been helpful in providing you with additional child safety information that you may find useful?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion

Comments: _____



ROCKTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

PO Box 349
Rockton, IL 61072
815-624-6010

March 30, 1995

Rockton Grade School
400 Chapel
Rockton, IL 61072

On behalf of the Rockton Fire Department, I would like to thank you for organizing the Children's Safety Fair. It was a great opportunity to educate our young community on safety issues.

Your leadership in children's safety not only helps the community but also reflects well on the commitment of our teachers.

Thank you once again for all your hard work.

Sincerely:

Scott Drost

Lt. Scott Drost
Rockton Fire Department